

Acknowledgements

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The eggs of *Corvus tristis* and *Corvus moneduloides*

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Corvus tristis

Goodwin (1976, 1986) described two eggs of this species, the only two he had seen, and his comments were evidently followed in good faith by Madge & Burn (1994) as a valid description of the species' eggs. The eggs in question are in The Natural History Museum (NHM, Tring), but their provenance is highly suspect. They were purchased at Stevens' Sale Rooms, in 1862, where they had been identified as being of *Manucodia atra* (= *M. nigra*; Paradisaeidae), and were stated to have been taken in Mysol (= Misool) in the western Papuan chain. They were registered

1862.12.17.1, but are clearly not eggs of a *Manucodia*, rather a *Corvus*, albeit rather atypical being pale greenish white, heavily spotted at the broad end and sparingly elsewhere with brown. Realising that they were incorrectly identified, Ogilvie-Grant (1912) reidentified them as *Corvus fuscicapillus*, but noted their doubtful identity, calling them 'Two eggs believed to be those of the Great-billed Crow'. In the 1960s, Shane Parker when curating the NHM collection apparently altered the identification to *Corvus tristis*, for unknown and unsubstantiated reasons. Neither species of *Corvus* is known from Misool (Madge & Burn 1994). The identity is therefore unproven and there is no valid description of the eggs of *C. tristis*.

Corvus moneduloides

Goodwin (1976) stated that this species 'usually' lays two eggs per clutch, presumably because Shane Parker wrongly catalogued two eggs in NHM as a clutch. He evidently overlooked that the catalogue of H. B. Tristram (in whose collection they originally were) clearly states 'From a nest of 4 eggs taken by E. L. Layard ... The first nest known. The other two eggs [are] in Herr Nehrkorn's collection'. Goodwin (1986) modified this information to 'usually 2 or 3 eggs per clutch'. His source is unclear, but these data were also transcribed in good faith by Madge & Burn (1994). Thus, whilst there is no reason to doubt the identity of what are probably the only known eggs of the species, the published information on clutch size appears incorrect.

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